

REMARKS

The Official Action of 3 April 2006 has been carefully considered and reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

Independent claims 1 and 69 have been amended more clearly to distinguish over the cited art. The recitations added to these claims draw clear support from the specification as filed at, for example, page 59, first full paragraph.

The claims stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Ishida et al in view of Idota et al. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

The claimed invention relates to a surface treatment method that can improve the storage characteristics (such as light resistance, water resistance and gas resistance) over time of recorded materials made by an ink jet recording method comprising depositing droplets of ink onto a recording medium. Applicant has found that the claimed surface treatment method provides materials recorded by ink jet recording with improved storage characteristics that are comparable to the storage characteristics of silver halide photographs.

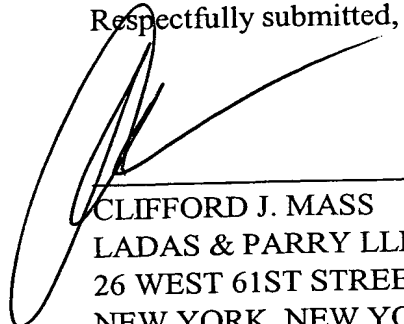
In contrast, the method described in the primary reference, Ishida, is a method for processing a silver salt photosensitive material used for a printer for silver salt photo printing, wherein the image is formed by developing the photographic material with a developer, not with droplets of ink. The secondary reference, Idota, also relates to silver halide photography,

wherein the image is not formed of droplets of ink. There is nothing in either of these references that would show or suggest applying the claimed surface treatment to a recording medium on which particles of ink are deposited to form an image. Indeed, there would have been no motivation to modify the cited references to provide for an image formed by ink jet recording as this would impermissibly change the principle of operation of the references. See MPEP 2143.01(VI) ("If the proposed modification or combination of the prior art would change the principle of operation of the prior art invention being modified, then the teachings of the references are not sufficient to render the claims *prima facie* obvious.").

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the cited references cannot set forth even a *prima facie* case of obviousness for any of the claims as amended. This is *a fortiori* true with respect to claims 70 and 71, which recite the amounts of the recited overcoat layer. The Examiner considers that it would have been obvious to optimize the amounts to achieve a desired effect, without being so great as to damage the image or be wasteful of material. The Examiner has respectfully overlooked that the amounts necessary to achieve a desired effect for, or to avoid damage to, the images formed by silver salt photo printing would be different from the amounts that are desirable for use with the recited image formed from ink particles. There is nothing in the cited references that would show or suggest the claimed amounts for use with the claimed ink jet images.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that all rejections and objections of record have been successfully traversed and that the application is now in allowable form. An early notice of allowance is earnestly solicited and is believed to be fully warranted.

Respectfully submitted,



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